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MISSIONARY LINK

FOR THE

Woman's Union Missionary Society of America

FOR HEATHEN LANDS.

VOL. 4. *MAY, 1871.* No. 9.

Since our last issue Miss Brittan and her reinforcement for zenana-work have reached our "American Home," and, have actively commenced labor in Calcutta and Allahabad. Many, to whom Miss Brittan's name has become a household word, will gladly connect their personal remembrances of her, with the continued narrations of mission progress in India which have heretofore made the pages of our little paper so attractive.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

REPORTS FROM OUR MISSIONARIES.

INDIA--Calcutta.

Extracts from the Journal of Miss Brittan.

PASSAGE TO BOMBAY.

We had very rough weather and head-winds all down the Gulf of Venice, and had an excellent view of the Ionian Isles as we passed in and out among them, but they looked very dreary and desolate. It seemed hard to realize that we were passing over the same waters on which St. Paul sailed so many hundred years ago. Oh! that God would give to us more of the spirit of that great missionary. I could but think of the contrast of his self-renouncing, self-sacrificing spirit, and of ours, so ready to complain

at every little inconvenience. We were nine days going down the Red Sea to Aden, and only remained there one day. We arrived at Bombay, on Saturday, December 10th, very thankful that our tedious voyage was over, and that, through God's mercy, we were all in good health. We spent Sunday evening with Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Harding, missionaries of the American Board, and several others, who warmly welcomed the new-comers to India. They wished some of us to remain there, as there was much need for zenana teachers in Bombay, which has a population of over nine hundred thousand, and is the second city in her majesty's dominion. Our new laborers felt their faith and zeal much encouraged and warmed by the earnest love for their work exhibited by these faithful laborers, who have now for years borne the burden and heat of the day. Leaving Bombay early Monday, we reached Allahabad on Tuesday after midnight, and found the dear missionaries of our own Station waiting for us at the depot.

VISIT TO ALLAHABAD.

We only remained two days at our "Home" in this station, but quite long enough to see how admirably Miss Wilson, who is superintendent here, has managed the mission work. It has increased so rapidly that she was anxious I should leave two young ladies with her, but we could not spare them, and finally decided to appoint Miss Butler who, with Miss Thomas and Miss Melixitt, and the four native teachers will make a good little working corps for the present.

ONCE MORE IN CALCUTTA.

Saturday morning we reached our "Home," and I was delighted with its appearance, since accommodations for the Orphanage have been added, as the architect has carried out my plans exactly.

We had a delightful commencement to the New Year, as "the week of prayer" was so well atttended here. A union service was held every morning, at 7½, in the different churches, and we felt refreshed thus to commence our united labors in this one great work. Rev. Mr. Fordyce, who conducted the services, related to us one morning a most touching story. He was once preaching a

missionary sermon in Scotland, where he told the sad fate of the women in India, and noticed the people and the poor women of the congregation seemed particularly affected. A few days afterward the pastor of the church was met in the street by one of his parishioners, an old woman, half-blind, who earned her living by going on errands and any work that came in her way. She came up to him, and with a bright smile, put sixpence in his hand, telling him it was for the mission work in India. Her pastor knowing how very poor she was, said, "No, no, Maggie; this is too much for you to give, for you cannot afford it." She then told him she had just been on an errand for a kind gentleman, and instead of a few coppers he had given her ninepence, and said she, "The sil'er and the gold is the Lord's, and the copper will do for poor Maggie." How many lessons do God's poor teach us—poor in this world, but rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom. Mr. F. says the greatest change he has noticed since his return to India, after an absence of fourteen years, is in the progress of education among the native women, and the entire change of ideas on that subject among the men.

SUPERVISION OF THE MISSION.

As I am superintendent of our work here, I have determined to visit with every missionary, each school and zenana in turn, so that I may become acquainted with all that have been commenced in my absence.

In the village, about twelve miles from Calcutta, called R——, we have a large number of zenanas and schools, for, as it is in the country, girls have more liberty and can be gathered together in this way. In this place four ladies go every two days to superintend the schools. I accompanied them one day, when we were obliged to rise early, as the journey is partly by rail, and the last three miles by the palkies. The palky bearers carried us by a foot path through which it would be impossible for any other conveyance to go; sometimes it was through beautiful woods with multitudes of wild flowers perfuming the air deliciously, and again the path was so rough that, if the bearers were not sure-footed, we would have had many an accident. At length we emerged upon a cluster of

native houses, and were saluted from one by a number of children's voices calling out as soon as they caught sight of the palky : " Maam salaam, Maam salaam ! " We first visited Kali's school. This woman, a widow, was taught in one of the zenanas a long time ago. She studied very hard, and begged that she might be allowed to open a school and teach, herself. She says she no more believes in her heathen gods, but she is not a Christian ; however, she teaches her scholars very well from all our Christian books. The first class, eight in number, beside their other studies, have just finished " Peep of Day " in Bengali. I asked the girls a great number of questions about Jesus as the Saviour, and was delighted with their answers. They certainly have received some Christian instruction, and God, the Holy Spirit, alone can apply it with power to their hearts. I am most anxious always to teach them that it is faith in Christ alone that can save them, that He has done all for us, and that our good works are only a proof of our love for Him. After distributing some toys to the children we left at one o'clock. They have some ten or twelve women in the zenana close by who are all learning in the " Peep of Day," and some of them in Grammar and Geography. All the schools we had time to visit in turn, have made great improvement, and when we returned to Calcutta at night, I felt we had passed a very satisfactory, though fatiguing day.

A COURAGEOUS STEP.

Last evening one of my zenana ladies came to visit me. She is a widow, and I trust one who loves the Lord Jesus, as she has suffered persecution for His sake. She has two children, a son of nineteen and a daughter of fourteen, who has now her second child, six months old. She and her daughter, were my first two pupils. She loves me very much, but I trust she loves her Saviour more. The head man of the house, is her husband's brother, a very bigoted old fellow, but the one hundred and fifty in the family are obliged to submit to his authority, though all are more enlightened than he is. For the last three years I have believed this widow to be a sincere Christian, but have never urged her to leave her home and make a profession of Christianity, as I believe she

can do much more good where she is at present. When her son comes of age, and obtains his property, he intends to have a little house of his own, and take his mother to live with him; then, I trust, if God spares her life, she will come out before the world on the Lord's side. In the meantime she studies her Bible diligently, and I believe sets an excellent example to all in the house.

Before I went to America, she had persuaded her son several times to bring her to our "Home," unknown to the old babu, the head of the house. She being a widow, he has always been more rigid with her than with any of the others, depriving her of every pleasure and comfort. There are here certain great poojahs or festivals to the gods, in which it is very meritorious for all to bathe in the Ganges, and sometimes the Hindoos will permit their women to do this at night, sending them shut up tight in a palky. So the old man had permitted her to bathe, with her son to protect her. She made her ablutions very short, and came here afterward. While I was at home she did this once, but the old babu found it out, and was very angry indeed, and from that time he has forbidden any Christian to enter the house. They have all taunted her, and she has borne the same reproach that the Gentiles did first at Antioch. They have pointed the finger of scorn continually at her. "You are a Christian! You are a Christian!" She did not mind it, but her son who loves her very dearly, and who is intellectually a Christian, felt it very keenly, for they would mockingly say to him, "Oh, your mother is a Christian!" and he would beg her never to read the Bible or pray when others could see her. He wanted her to keep her light hidden.

During my absence from India, a young wife in this house ran away, and when caught, told many falsehoods to exculpate herself, In revenge my poor widow was shut up in a room by herself for weeks, not allowed even to see her own son, and when she was released all the others were forbidden to hold any intercourse with her, and in every way most sorely persecuted her. When she paid me a visit on my return, I asked her if she could still look up and feel that Jesus was with her? "Oh, yes," she said, "if it had not been for that I think I should have died. I would lie there on the floor with my arm over my face almost all day crying, and the only

thing to comfort me was, that God knew I had not done anything wrong, and that Jesus loved me and would pity me. It is only lately that they have begun to be the least kind to me, but they said I should never see you again, and that no Christian should come inside our house any more." "Well, how did you escape now; and were you not afraid to come?" I asked. She answered, "My son has sent a servant with me, and has staid home to watch. My sister, who used to live in another street, has now moved next door to us, and the last few weeks the babu has let me go and see her over the top of the verandah. I went there to-day, and after dark I got my servant to open the back door of her yard. My son will tell any one, if they ask for me, that I went in to see my sister." "But," said I, "how will you get home?" "I have sent the servant back, and told him to wait at home till all the babus have gone to bed and the house is dark, and then come for me. The servants go in and out of the house at all hours of the night, and the doorkeeper, when he opens the door, as he has never seen me, will think I am one of the servants." At night both men and women wrap themselves up so that it would be very difficult to distinguish any one. You see how possible it is with all the vigilance of the Hindoos to deceive them. I told her I did not think this was quite right, and glad as I was to see her, she must not come again unless her son was with her; that I was so much afraid of the consequences if she should be found out. "Oh," she said, "I was determined to see you, even if they killed me." It was very late, nearly twelve o'clock before the servant came for her. I was getting very much alarmed, and told her she must send her son in the morning to let me know if she reached home safely, which she did, I am happy to say.

Will you not pray for this poor woman, dear friends, that her love for Christ may be so sure and true, that she may be willing to suffer for His sake, and being "steadfast unto death," may receive at last "the crown of life."

Extracts from the Journal of Miss Hook.

RE-OPENING OF A SCHOOL.

Last summer when the Hindoo widow was baptized, which made such disturbance in India, and such ill-feelings were excited against the missionaries, a school in one part of the city shut its doors upon us. The babu who owned the room said we should have it no longer. A very few of the children would have continued learning, but no one in that locality would give us a school-room for love or money, so we were obliged to abandon it. Nearly thirty pupils attended it, but marriage, the bane of all girls' schools, had reduced it very much. Ten days ago, Louisa, one of the native teachers came to me and said a babu had met her in the street, and asked her to open the school again; that he would give a room. She went to the place, and found it was but a few doors from the former spot, and twelve old pupils came to meet her. A few days after, when Miss Hatchell visited it, she found a little school of thirteen in a much better room than the old one, and as every day brought more children, it now numbers twenty-three. Three zenanas have also opened in the immediate vicinity, and the prospects are much more encouraging than they were before. How strangely God brings good out of seeming evil!

VISIT TO THE MUSEUM.

Miss Thomas has four zenana pupils in two houses, who were most anxious to go and see the Museum, but some of them had never been out of doors, and they were afraid to ask their husbands lest they would forbid it. Miss Thomas would not take them secretly, but one day when one of the babus came in, she asked him, and he consented. It was arranged that Miss Thomas should call for them, and five should go in their gharry. After their visit to the Museum she brought them to see me, and I found that other women in the house were so anxious to go, that they cried and entreated her to take them; she consented; and they crowded seven, beside a child, in a gharry, which only holds two, and as the day was so warm they had to fan Miss Thomas to keep her from fainting. Miss Hatchell had an English "Line Upon

Line " in her hand when she went in a zenana one day, which she left for the women to read. The next week they told her the babu liked it so much he had read it twice, and was greatly interested.

VACANT PLACE SUPPLIED.

Perhaps you may have been apprised of the death of your Bible-reader, Hannah, who breathed her last after a few hours' illness. She was only about twenty or twenty-one years of age. She has been working for us two years, and during that time her conduct has been quite exemplary, and I believe, conscientious. I have good reason for believing that she not only had a naturally sunny temper, but also Christian firmness, which made her life so correct, and this gives me comfort in her death, for, I trust, she is now in the presence of a reconciled God. I hope her teaching may have been such that it will bring forth fruit in the future. Hannah was beloved by all our teachers, and they have felt her death much. She was a great favorite of mine, and I feel that it will be difficult to fill her place. I now propose giving you Martha, a Bible-reader, whom we have had some time, and who is striving to do her duty and benefit the ignorant classes of her people. She comes here for a few hours in the morning and studies to improve in English and needle-work, will then get her breakfast and teach five and six hours daily. She has commenced to teach English to her pupils. The character of the Bengalis is very excitable, and a small thing causes them to speak in a loud and angry tone, and this leads to little arguments among themselves; sometimes this is rather amusing to us when the native teachers come here to school in the morning. But Martha is an exception to this, and we have never had to check her, nor have I known her to have difficulty with the others. She is so popular among her pupils that, when I thought it best for her to take a school, and sent another teacher to her houses, they refused to learn until Martha was sent back to them. I think she is faithful and teaches well.

ADVANCEMENT OF THE LITTLE WIFE.

The Mission Band, " Little Charitables," will be much pleased to hear that their beneficiary, Monney, the Pundit's wife, is im-

proving very much. Although her mind is not a brilliant one, and she learns rather slowly, still when I count the short time she has been in school, I think she has learned a great deal. When she first commenced in school she knew nothing, and now she can read both in Bengali and English. She can understand all that is said to her in English, and answers my questions very easily and with a very good pronunciation. She has also written once to her husband in Bengali, and the last time she wrote him in English. He was so delighted with that, that he instantly replied to it, and expressed in strong terms his great pleasure. A few days ago, when I brought her to spend the day with us, I asked her about the letters, at which she laughed quite merrily. Her husband has finished his medical studies, and has gone to B—— to get into practice, and as he did not succeed very well at first, he opened a little drug shop and is now doing better. When he has saved a little to live upon, I suppose he will want to take his wife. She is now about thirteen, quite old for a wife to be away from her husband in this country. Could you have seen her when she first left the zenana, and again now, you would feel great pleasure in having expended your money upon her. I am sure her husband will bless you for saving him from so ignorant a wife as he would have had, but for your kindness.

Extracts from Letters of Miss Ward.*

INSIGHT INTO MISSION LABOR.

We reached Calcutta, December 17th, and found the friends here anxiously awaiting us, as our journey had been prolonged beyond the appointed time. We are much pleased with our "American Mission Home." This name is carved on the gateway, and as we first caught sight of it we felt like cheering it, for before this it seemed as if we were foreigners in a strange land. The building is of brick, plastered over and whitened; is large, airy and commodious. The young ladies that we found here are very pleasant and companionable, and seem much interested in the work. As we arrived only a few days before the holidays began, it was thought best not to open any new zenanas until the com-

A part of these extracts were written to ladies in Ithaca, N. Y., who support Miss Ward.

mencement of the new year; consequently we have had time for rest. We gained a little insight into the character of the work by visiting with Miss Brittan some of her old pupils, where we were well received. We found the women bright, intelligent, willing to learn, and we think our work cannot be called labor. I am sure we shall enjoy it, and if we can help in the next five years to accomplish as much as has been done in the last, our time and strength will not have been wasted.

COMMENCEMENT OF STUDY.

Last Monday, Jan. 3d, we commenced our work—a pleasant one we find it, as well as a very much needed one. Everything is so new to us, and the work presses so upon us, it promises more than we can possibly attend to. The language will be very difficult. Our pundit, or Bengali teacher, comes to us every Tuesday and Friday, at eight in the morning. I wish you could see him. He is so bright, thorough and intelligent, it would do your heart good. Imagine, if you can, a room, with large white pillars in it supporting the ceiling, the floor covered with matting, furniture covered with brown linen, a few pictures on the walls, while flowers send a delightful odor around. In one corner are seated four persons diligently at work over a Bengali primer. In the centre sits an individual whom at first sight you would say was a woman, but a closer scrutiny at the dark face, large mouth, bushy eyebrows, and short black hair, parted on the side, decides him to be a man. He wears a long white dress, coming below the knees, over which is thrown a white shawl with broché border. He wears no stockings, but embroidered low shoes, and is decidedly oriental in appearance. We have seen so much of the new and strange, that nothing excites our curiosity now. I hope we shall not be too busy, so that we must neglect study. One thing is certain, that people here do not accomplish as much as those at home on account of the climate. Just now the weather is delightful.

FORMING NEW TIES.

Jan. 17.—Although we have only been here a month, we are getting fully initiated in the work. We have our fifteen and sixteen houses a week, which we visit once in that time, accompa-

nied by our interpreter. It is sad to think that when we sit down to teach these poor women, we cannot understand one word they say to us, or speak to them except through a third person. To say that I like the work, would hardly express my feelings. I am glad it is to be my life-work, and that the little energy I have, may be used for Christ in this way.

As I visited one of my women yesterday unexpectedly, she came in not looking as neat as usual, and immediately began to make apologies for the appearance of her little room and herself, saying she did know that I was coming. She hung her head, and looked very much ashamed as she spoke. I was glad that she noticed and thought of these things. This woman is very bright and interesting, and listens attentively to the Bible-lesson. She understands fully the plan of salvation, and yesterday gave me a clear explanation of the difference between true Christians, and those merely called by the name ; but when I pressed the matter home to her own heart, she merely hung her head. We can go only so far, leaving the rest as the work of the Holy Spirit.

OUR CALCUTTA ORPHANAGE.

Our missionaries write : "We are gradually gathering the children already supported by the Society, into our Orphanage ; we have five now, and expect seven more in a few days. There is very much to do for them at first, for we have to provide them with everything. Miss Brittan brought out a great many little dresses, made by the 'Mission Bands' in America, which are very acceptable, and will save us a great deal of labor. We hope to train these orphans for teachers and interpreters in zenanas ; and we want to bring them up as civilized Christians, to eat their meals at a table, and use spoons and forks. These things are entirely new to them, and the managers of other Orphanages, with one exception, think it is impossible to train them thus ; but that shows what a need there is, for this kind of training."

Allahabad.

Extracts of Letters from Miss Wilson.

REMARKABLE CONVERSION.

I have been much interested in an account Rev. J. Bate, of the English Bapt. Miss., gave me of a visit he has just made to one of their missions. You must know, from reading of the Karens, and Burmese, and Hindoos, that there are several different nationalities represented here in India ; but unless you have given more attention to the subject than I had, you will have no idea that there are so very many. They are quite distinct in customs, language and appearance. One caste is called Garrows. Their home is among the hills, and, being a quiet people, they have not been molested by the various invaders of the land, and so they have lived on, one generation after another, without any changes in their customs. About ten years ago a soldier from that district, who was in a sepoy regiment, learned to read. While a house formerly occupied by missionaries was being cleared for the officers, a few tracts were swept out, which the sepoy gathered up and began reading. His mind was much impressed, and he begged for more books to learn about those wonderful things. They were sent to him, and finally he was converted. After a few months he asked to be allowed to go home to tell this good news to his friends, and after a time he got his discharge through the influence of some Christian men. He gathered his people together and told them "the sweet story of old," and was listened to with great wonder. After some months he went back to the missionary, and begged him to come or send some one to teach them, and tell them what to do. The missionary did so, and found a large number were, so far as he could judge, really converted. A church was formed, and ever since, it has gradually increased, and in five years there were four hundred members of the little church, who had given the money to build a chapel for worship. The people have no written language, and several missionaries are now engaged in writing one out. The elements are not from any of the known languages, as the Hindi and Bengalee are from the Sanscrit, or like our Latin or Greek terminations, so that it will be a great labor to bring it into form.

The people live in houses made of brush and mud. They know nothing of caste, and I think do not worship idols, though they are very superstitious. Mr. Bate told me he assisted the pastor of the church to baptize twelve persons while he was there. They went out to the river side and while singing a hymn, the people began to collect around. There were sloping banks, and many shepherds and cow-herds were watching their animals. Gradually these came nearer and nearer, until they and their families made a crowd of about three hundred people.

STRUGGLING AFTER LIGHT.

I am most interested in two pupils who are both quite advanced in their studies in Bengali, and can read a little in English. An English lady asked me to bring them to see her on Saturday, and they seemed to enjoy the visit very much. Mrs. I—— kindly played a number of very lively airs on her piano, and showed them some fancy work which she is preparing for a fair for the benefit of a manse soon to be built for our minister here. Even the ride was quite an event in their monotonous lives, and I presume they will never forget it. S——'s husband is a leading member of the Brahmo Somaj here, and is quite liberal in his views, and seems to take a true interest in her progress. I noticed a few days since some writing in the Bengali character, neatly framed and hanging on the wall. I asked if it was their confession of faith. But she said it was a plan for the use of her time each day ; so many hours for household duties, for study and for her embroidery, and that she was arranging her duties to meet it. Every Tuesday she receives several of the wives of members of the Somaj, when they sing some of their hymns together, and then read a short address or exhortation, which her husband has prepared for the purpose. My assistant says that many of their hymns are the same as are used in the Baptist Bengali service, but they avoid all those in which the name of Christ is mentioned, as they are Theistic in their belief. Still I hope that, as S—— knows so much of the Bible, she will be able to communicate some truth to them. The other pupil and her husband do not belong to any sect, having cast off the trammels of idolatry, but not seeing the necessity of any atone-

ment, the husband's creed is, "Let every one follow their own conscience." His outward deportment is, as far as I am aware, perfectly correct, and he would be received as a gentleman in any society, and seems most kind and affectionate as a husband and father. The woman reads her Bible, and seems to understand much that it teaches, and sometimes I can see that her heart is touched by it, but her husband's opinions have great weight with her.

CONVEYANCES OF INDIA.

Among the amusing things of India are the conveyances, the most popular of which seems to be a combination of a sulky and a willow cradle. Imagine the latter painted dark brown, and adorned with patches of bright-colored cloth, and bits of gold and silver tinsel, the cradle fastened at the foot to a board, which runs over the top of the wheels. We often see one person sitting under the cradle-top, while two others sit on the side pieces. The harness is made of ropes and bands, covered with scarlet cloth stitched with bright colors; then there is a pyramidal projection on the back about a foot high, of scarlet and tinsel, to which the lines are attached. Another mode of locomotion is to have a swing attached to a pole, which is carried on the shoulders of two men. The palky, which is like a packing-box, comes in for a share of the patronage of the moving crowd, but that too is adorned with bright colors, of which this people are so fond. The loads they carry on the poor forlorn horses and diminutive asses, is wonderful, enclosing masses of brick and sand in pieces of strong cloth. The people carry loads of hay on their heads, and look as if they could scarcely walk with their burden. During our walk yesterday morning we met our butter man, who had four brass vessels, one on the top of the other, on his head, which are the kind universally used for cooking and carrying food.

DOMESTIC CUSTOMS OF THE HINDOOS.

In the course of my reading I have made the following extracts from a Book written by a converted Hindoo.

"Part of the religion of all castes consists in feeding the Brahmins. This is considered highly meritorious, and the Brahmins

take good care that the doctrine be not forgotten and does not lose its force. The food must be prepared by persons of high caste and consists mostly of sweetmeats and preparations of rice and milk. The dinners are often given in gratitude for some success in an undertaking or the safe return from a journey, and any number may be invited except three or thirteen. At these dinners the priests drink from their own brass jugs, but the plates are made of leaves pinned together with a stiff straw.

"The religion of some of the lower castes consists in repeating the name of Rham when they rise in the morning, bathing in the middle of the day, and repeating the name again before going to bed. This is their daily worship, and is occasionally varied by a Brahmin coming to the house to do poojah, for which they must pay very highly. The people are very credulous, and sometimes when a priest thinks they are not devout enough, he makes a hole in the earth. In this he places an image on top of some grain and pours water on it; in a short time the priests tell the people that a goddess has made its appearance in that place. They flock to see the miracle, and as the grain begins to sprout they can plainly see that the image rises; of course there is a great excitement, and they worship with new zeal.

"There is one prayer which will take away all sin, however grievous or heinous, this is the formula, 'O, earth, firmament and heaven, we meditate on the great light of the Sun, may it enlighten our hearts.' Sometimes they will shout to those passing their places of worship—'Present offerings to our goddess and you will not have to go to hell.' It is said in one of their shastras that a man's sins are all in his hair, and can be removed by shaving in a holy place. One of these holy places is below Allahabad, where the third river, the Tribune, joins the Ganges and Jumna. Many pilgrims visit holy places, and the greater the number of pilgrimages the more merit. After visiting several, the Hindoo enjoys the greatest complacency and feels quite easy as to his estate in the future world. Some devotees make a vow to measure all the distance from their home to a sacred place, a very painful mode of locomotion and very trying in the hot sun. Those who see them doing it, say, 'He must have help from God to do it,'

and think him very holy, and it does seem they must be anxious and sincere, though deluded, or they could not endure such hardship."

I agree with the author of the book from which I have taken these extracts, that "they are a thousand times better than those highly enlightened philosophers, who, fleeing from superstition, have leaped over religion and are walking in the broad road of atheism." They have a great number of superstitions. I will mention a few of them. If a person is about to commence some undertaking and hears some one sneeze, he must stop a few moments or have bad luck. If a shopman sells his first article on credit, he will have an unlucky day. It is considered very bad to say that a babe is looking fat and hearty; and a mother will often invent a number of complaints when her child is very well. A child must never look into a glass before it has its first teeth. For the most of these things they never pretend to give a reason.

CHINA—Shanghai.

Extracts of Letters from Mrs. Starr.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL.

On the 6th of January Mrs. Nelson invited to her house all the descendants of the children of the Mission schools of the Episcopal Church organized in 1845 by Bishop Boone and Miss Emma Jones. Fifty-seven were present, many bringing their mothers with them. These are children of Christian parents; in some instances on both sides, but in every case either father or mother was a convert at the time of their marriage. The mothers were very bright and intelligent in their appearance, and we notice a marked difference in the countenances of those who have had a Christian education. The room was handsomely dressed in evergreen, interspersed with holly and mistletoe, and the Christmas-tree was beautiful, adorned with foreign presents. Bishop Williams presented the gifts, making a few remarks to each child in Chinese. After the tree was exhausted of its offerings, they were invited to the dinning-room, where, among other refreshments, a fine surprise had been prepared for the occasion by placing live quails in a cone-shaped

cake. As soon as it was opened, the birds took their flight about the room. The children were delighted, and captured all the birds to carry home with their other gifts. They ate but little, taking all that was offered them, and rolling it up in red paper. It was very amusing to see them clear the table ; not a morsel was left, according to Chinese etiquette. They were a happy band, and went home full of delight. This is the first gathering of the kind and shows there has been good work done, which will spring up into life eternal. As I looked upon the portrait of Bishop Boone I felt his ransomed spirit was with us at that re-union, and that from the glory of his heavenly home he rejoiced with us over the souls redeemed through the blood of the covenant.

RELIGIOUS SERVICE.

A few Sabbaths since I attended the native church in the city. They have a fine large building, and with the boys connected with the school, a very good congregation was present. Five persons were confirmed by Bishop Williams ; one of them was King-Mai, the young girl Mrs. Bridgeman took to America, who gives bright evidence of a Christian character. Pray for her and her interesting family, that they may be true lights in these dark places of the earth.

CHRISTIAN CHINESE WEDDING.

I was invited to attend the wedding of Rev. Mr. Nyan Yung Kung, known in America as Mr. Marshall, and who, while there, had a very bright conversion. We attended the "Feast of the Women" on the day of the wedding, according to their custom. We found a gay assemblage of the higher class in their elegant winter suits, wadded with cotton or lined with fur. Their hair was very tastefully dressed with jeweled pins and flowers. The feast was very abundant and of great variety. The ladies were much amused to see my efforts to use their "chop-sticks." Their custom is the reverse of ours ; they begin with the dessert and end with the substantials. The bride was richly dressed in red satin, elegant in design and workmanship.

At five the bridal procession entered the American Episcopal Church, where, under the bright gaslight, which more fully dis-

played their gorgeous attire, they presented quite a brilliant scene. The bride was brought in a sedan chair and met at the chancel by the groom, where the marriage was performed by Rev. Mr. Nelson ; the bride not lifting her veil or the groom removing his hat. Though many of their national customs were preserved, yet it is a different matter from their heathen rites, and it is only one out of many things which marks the progress and influence of Christian truth. May God speed the day when all this great nation shall come to the Gospel feast and become the Lamb's bride.

Reports of Bible Readers and Schools.

TURKEY—Smyrna.

Extracts of Letters from the Misses Siraganian.

Feeling assured that it is always gratifying to you to hear about our beloved work, we will try to give you fresh details. The number of pupils attending the school is about the same as last summer, but we are receiving accessions from day to day. Nine months ago, when we moved into this house, as you recollect, nearly all the scholars who flocked in were new comers. So restless and unruly were they, that while the introductory prayer, however brief, was being offered, they talked, laughed and disputed with each other, scarcely one of them remaining who did not deserve either penalty or reproof. So that while one of us prayed, the other was occupied in quietly going the rounds, among the restless, wondering group, hushing this one, tapping that one, and doing her best to secure some degree of order. But now we are most happy to report that weeks pass without the necessity of a single reproof for disturbing that service. Is it not God Himself who is helping us in inciting their young hearts to reverence His worship? The same trifling inattention interrupted the lesson of sacred song. But now when the hour of singing approaches they are delighted, keep perfect order, and consider it the greatest privation and worst of penalties, when for any reason we announce that "the afternoon singing will be omitted." Their parents come and thank us especially that we teach them Bible stories,

from both the Old and New Testament, and many of their relatives listening to those beautiful narratives which they repeat at home, become interested, and bringing the hard-earned wages of their daily toil in their hands, beg us to buy the whole Bible for them. One of the mothers came to-day and, among other things, said, "My little girl loves you very much and enjoys coming to your school, but most of all she is charmed with the Bible stories. Now I do beg you buy me a Testament for my older daughter, who longs to read those stories for herself."

A few days ago the older sister of another of our girls came and bought a copy of the Old Testament. The power of Bible-truth working upon young and tender hearts of ten amazes us. One day a little girl's doll that she was carrying in her pocket, disappeared. Immediately suspicion rested upon a little new-comer who had been only a day or two in the school. However there was no proof of her being the guilty one. So, instead of reading the chapter in the course at the opening of school the next morning, several passages bearing upon the sin of stealing, and its consequences were read with a few explanatory remarks. Scarcely was the prayer ended when that same little girl came forward, weeping and exclaiming, "I am the thief, I am the guilty one, but I did not know it was so wicked to steal; forgive me, do please forgive me and pray God to forgive me too." A heart as hard as stone would have melted at her supplicating tones. Of course we all instantly rose and prayed that God would forgive the little penitent. Some of the parents say, "We are so thankful to you for all you teach our dear children, but especially for leading them in the paths of virtue, and for the great and utter change wrought in their whole conduct and demeanor." We hear from every side that the sweet stories of our Redeemer and of the holy prophets that foretold his blessed coming, are being repeated in all their homes and by the wayside, even by the very least of these little ones. As for telling lies, which they were amazed, at first, to hear us call a sin, it is now I may say, banished from the school. If, haply, occurring among themselves, we hear them expostulating with their delinquent companions and repeating texts of admonition. We are also very

happy to be able to report a prayer-loving spirit as general among our pupils. They often ask us, "How shall we pray at home?" And invariably when we pray with them in school, all eyes are closed, their little hands reverently clasped, and their moving lips often audibly murmuring the words of the supplications which they so earnestly try to learn and remember. One of the mothers said the other day with much feeling, "Ever since my child attended your school, an indescribable grace seems to have descended upon her; her face beams with a new gentleness and sweetness." From many, many families we could give you good tidings, had we time to detail. There is an open door on every side of us. Many are disappointed that we cannot visit them more frequently, and they will add, "Oh, it is a privilege to have you in the neighborhood, but we long to see you oftener."

BURMAH—Maulmain.

Extracts of Letters from Mrs. *and* Miss Haswell.

[Communicated by Philadelphia Branch.]

The health of Miss Haswell has compelled her to return to this country for a time, but the school in the meantime is kept up under the superintendence of her mother, who writes—"The pupils have made good improvement in their several studies, and best of all in the interest they manifest in the things pertaining to their eternal well-being. There are nine little girls from eleven to fourteen years of age, who profess to trust in the Lord, and would gladly be baptized, did we not prefer to have them wait for a time, and prove their faith by their lives. We have frequent applications for new pupils, and we would be glad to increase the school to forty, as we have room for their accommodation, and the proportionate expense would be less than with a smaller number. But we cannot increase the school without the necessary means for their support, which comes principally from your Society. Should you withhold your accustomed remittances, we should indeed be in trouble, and unless other ways unknown to us at present should appear, we should have to send the pupils away. I am more and more impressed with the importance and superiority

of the boarding-school over the day-school for Burmese girls. We have a day-school of forty pupils quite near this. But here the pupils are under a thorough Christian influence in school hours and out. We fondly hope that our daughter who commenced the school may with restored health and strength return to carry on what she has begun with so much difficulty and so much promise. Our school numbers thirty; the three last received are taken in on condition that funds come in for their support."

Miss Haswell writes:

Three years ago, one of the most intelligent girls in the school became very much interested in the subject of religion. Her father was the adopted son of *Mah Doke*, who is mentioned frequently in the memoirs of Dr. and Mrs. Judson. He was not a member of the Church, and his wife was a bigoted heathen. As soon as she found that her daughter *Mah Myat* wished to be a Christian, she sent for her oldest daughter to try, by ridicule and threats to persuade her to give up all such thoughts. Finding that did not have the desired effect, her mother took the child from school, and carried her to heathen places of amusement, and in every way sought to divert her mind from the subject. Meanwhile both Mah Doke and her son died, and the mother plunged more unrestrainedly into heathen practices. But through it all, with everything to oppose and discourage her, Mah Myat persisted in attending Church and Sabbath-school, daily read the Bible and prayed, and at last, on the first Sabbath of November, having gained her mother's consent, she united with the Church. In relating her experience, she said she found peace in believing in Christ while she was in the school, and she had never from that time given up her hope. Another former pupil was baptized at the same time. The school is becoming better known, and we have strong hope of getting a grant-in-aid from government. The Director of Public Instruction in Burmah visited us, and reported it a "model school for Burmese girls."

I think in three years, through the grant and local contributions, the school will be independent of aid from America. It is my intention, God willing, while I am here, to raise funds for the erec-

tion of new buildings for the school. We can accommodate forty pupils in the building we now have, but in order to do so it is necessary to partition off a part of the school-room as a sleeping-room and do without either recitation or dining-rooms. We want a building which will not only accommodate the pupils, but also contain apartments for the use of the principal.

MEXICO.

Extract of a Letter from Mrs. Park.

We are again in Caderita. The members of the little Church in this place were being scattered as sheep without a shepherd, and sent one of their number to solicit us to come to their assistance. Since our arrival we have held meetings every evening. We are staying in the house of one of the members who is a little better off than the rest, as he owns a house consisting of two rooms. In one of these we have opened a school for girls, and in the other we live. There has been a little school taught here since the 5th of April by Miss Saquinita Flores, whom I recommended to the "Woman's Union Missionary Society," feeling confident they would give her a little assistance in this good work. This young teacher has well employed her time. She brought her school to me for examination, and I have found some pupils, who were only commencing the alphabet last Spring, now read the Bible very correctly, and have committed several chapters to memory. One of these is a little girl of nine years, a member of a family consisting of five adults and two children, none of whom can read, so that she reads the Bible to them. Miss Flores is now studying with me, and endeavoring to prepare herself for further usefulness, and is making rapid progress. I trust that the Lord has further work for us to do here.

The people among whom we labor are very poor. The Protestant Christians have all the opposition of the Papists, and are scarcely able to live themselves. Our school has done very well, considering it is the first year, and that all the opposition which the priests could incite, has been brought to bear against it.

Home Department.

MEETINGS.

The public meeting of the Society was held in Brooklyn, Feb. 26th, at St. Ann's Church, Rev. Dr. Schenk, the rector, presiding. Addresses were made by Rev. Dr. Prime, Rev. Mr. Gracey, formerly a Missionary in India, Rev. Mr. Rose, Missionary from Burmah, and Rev. Mr. Matlack, of Philadelphia, but as they were fully reported in various papers, we will not repeat further notice of them.

The last quarterly meeting was held at the house of the President, March 15th. The usual exercises of these meetings were varied on this occasion by an exposition from Rev. Dr. Ormiston of the Reformed Church, of the narrative contained in the 13th Chapter of St. Mark,—the offering of the precious box of ointment. After drawing a beautiful and impressive picture of the scene described, he considered; 1st, For whom did Mary perform this work? It was for the Master. Love and gratitude to Him alone prompted it. 2d. What was the character of the offering? It was the best she had, the most precious of her earthly treasures. 3d. What was the manner of the offering? It was liberal. "She brake the box and *poured* it on His head." 4th. When did she make the offering? Christ said of it, "She is come *aforehand* to anoint my body to the burying." From these heads, fully enlarged upon, were gathered several practical lessons, relating to the motives and manner of Christian effort. We should first look well to our motives, being sure that love to Jesus prevails over every other consideration, and then give, not the remnants of our strength and talents, but the best that we have, a seasonable and liberal offering.

Mary made this a memorial gift. Lazarus had been restored to his sisters from the grave, and Mary poured out this offering, fragrant with gratitude and love. Many there are who have received similar proofs of Jesus' loving care and interposition, who can according to their ability, emulate Mary's example, and be blessed like her with those precious words, "She hath done what she could."

Rev. Mr. Ward, for many years a Missionary in India, related how the gospel was introduced among the Garrows, most wonderfully illustrating how God can, by his printed word, arrest even a heathen man, and bring him to earnest seeking for the truth.

C. A. R.

Owing to some misapprehension, the Report of the

PITTSBURGH AND ALLEGHENY BRANCH

was not sent us until a few weeks ago. To prevent any disappointment of these kind friends, we have made an exception to our general rule, and publish here extracts from the account of their year's work.

"In March, 1870, Miss Brittan visited Pittsburgh, and, we feel, did more to awaken an interest in Foreign Missions among the women of our city than was ever felt before. Even if her particular mission does not receive as much attention as we hoped, the cause of sending the Gospel to the heathen has been greatly stimulated. Our interest has especially been enlisted in behalf of the Orphanage where Miss Brittan has gathered little ones whose parents have died of famine. Ten orphans, supported by specific contribution, are being thoroughly educated for native teachers, and it is a pleasant thought that, among this little band one is to bear the name of one so justly loved by all our community. During the year two boxes of fancy work, one valued at $120, have been contributed, hoping to save the daily labor of the missionaries in preparing similar articles needed in the zenanas. We have four auxiliary societies in Pittsburgh, and they make the following reports:

"'The Mission Band of the Alleghany Orphan Asylum.' We organized in April, 1870, and hold regular monthly meetings, where 180 orphans are present. We have been encouraged in our work by some pleasant talks from Miss Brittan, of Calcutta, Miss Scott, of Africa, Rev. Mr. Thompson, of China; and at our last meeting, a lady and her two sons from China. Our monthly collections average $3.50, so we feel warranted in supporting a little girl in India, to be named Elizabeth Denny, in honor of the beloved president of our asylum. The managers of the asylum have promised us money as rewards for good conduct and perfect lessons, and we have decided to give the money thus earned to this work. We have already raised $22.97, but with $5.97 of this amount we purchased books for Miss Brittan's school. We will adopt our child from January, 1871, and will send our contributions as a New Year's Offering to little Elizabeth Denny.

"Susie Ayers, *Pres.* Miss Hervey, *Treas.*"

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